

## CONCRETE THINGS YOU CAN DO TO SUPPORT MOTHERS AND CHILDREN IN YOUR SCENE

- 1- Give Children Attention. Say something to them: just be your true self, whatever you are thinking, they are open to that. Children act better when they get attention. In the beginning of a meeting if a group gives the children some attention, they are often happier and better behaved for the rest of the meeting.
- 2- Develop childcare as an ongoing relationship with a child – it takes some time to get to know a child before they are comfortable with doing stuff with you away from their parents.
- 3- Offer a slot of time, to spend time with a child on a weekly basis
- 4- Integrate children and adults: it's more pleasant to watch children with other adults to talk to; it's more pleasant for the children to see adults enjoying each other and not feel a burden to them.
- 5- Include children in the planning of any activity, like a sewing workshop for instance.
- 6- Doing something child-friendly? Ask a kid if they want to come along. (Lynx has been taking Siu Loong for critical mass rides for three years and she loves it.) Children can benefit from activities their parents don't do and parents can benefit from the time to themselves.
- 7- If a baby is crying because it needs to be held and the parent has their hands busy and can not hold it; offer to hold the baby.
- 8- If a child is making a disturbance in an area, offer to go outside with the kid so the parent doesn't have to leave the event.
- 9- Meet parents at their level: come visit them at home or where ever their spaces are. Let parents talk about being parents: realize having a child is like having the most intense love affair you have ever known (says one parent. Another says – not.)
- 10- Acknowledge children: don't treat them like they are invisible
- 11- Give us a smile!

ALSO - When providing child care at political events (and every event should have child care!)

- 12- Visit the children and childcare providers in daycare – and say “Hi!” Childcare providers can feel isolated from others at the event. Have a cup of tea with them! (suggested by Siu Loong, age 5)
- 13- Parents with different aged children have different needs. Parents with younger children or children who aren't comfortable leaving their side yet would benefit from childcare that was off to a side of the same room or more central to the main events. Parents with older and more independent children benefit from having them in a different room or floor. Either way, childcare must be assessable.
- 14- Parents need to give more input to the day-care providers, about their and their children's needs during the planning of the event. At least tell them you are coming and the age of your child/ren.
- 15- It's comforting for parents to know childcare is available, even if they don't use it

AND - Contemplate

- 16- How much work/consuming being a parent is: 24/7; in the beginning years it's hard to even think straight: one is still adjusting to being a parent and young children's needs are very intensive
- 17- That radical parents don't fit in at mainstream places, like their children's schools - so when they go to an anarchist gathering and don't feel supported by their own culture – how bad that feels.

(suggestions from the end of the “Don't Leave Your Friends Behind” workshop at La Revolta!)